Share of solar energy

*154. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the share of solar energy is very nominal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken to increse the share of solar energy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) India receives solar energy equivalent to over 5,000 trillion kWh per year. The daily average solar energy incident over India varies from 4-7 kWh per square meter depending upon the location. Solar energy can be harnessed through two routes, namely solar photovoltaic (PV) and solar thermal, by direct conversion to electricity and heat energy respectively. The utilization of solar energy in the country is currently limited, yet it is regularly inceasing.

(b) The high initial cost of solar energy devices and systems, and lack of sufficient awareness are the main reasons for low utilization. However, some of the solar energy systems are becoming cost competitive to the conventional alternatives, when compared over the life of the systems. Solar water heaters, solar cookers and photovoltaic systems for small power applications in remote areas are the examples.

(e) The Ministry has taken several steps to increase the utilization of solar energy in the country, which include (i) expanded programmes of the Ministry of encourage utilization of solar energy systems through subsidy or soft loans, (ii) incentive to manufacturers, commercial users and power project developers, (iii) research and development to reduce the cost, improve the efficiency and performance of solar energy systems, (iv) support of Akshaya Urja shops to provide additional channels for sale and after-sales servicing of solar energy systems, and (v) create awareness about the solar energy systems and their benefits.

Pending road accident cases

*155. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of road accident cases lying pending in various High Courts in the country, as on the 30 October, 2007;

(b) the number of such cases lying pending for more than ten years in Allahabad High Court, as on that date; and

(c) what remedial steps are being taken by Government to get these cases disposed of at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (c) Information on the number of road accident cases pending in various High Courts in not maintained centrally. The information has been called for from all the High Courts and will be laid on the Table of the House.